

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims to read as follows.

A marked-up version of various pages of the claims indicating the changes made to the claims is appended to this paper.

β 11

1. (Currently Amended) A process for bonding an array of pile loops stitched onto a surface of a backing, each pile loop having a root portion that is held to the surface of a backing by a stitching thread, the process comprising the steps of :

prior to formation of the pile loops, applying a thermoplastic binder material having a predetermined melting point to the backing;

mechanically flexing the backing with the loops thereon into and out of the plane of the backing at a temperature greater than the melting point of the binder,

thereby to cause the binder material to melt and to flow and concentrate in the root portion of the pile loops, in the stitching thread underlaps holding the root portion to the backing, and near the surface of the backing adjacent to the root portions.

β 12

13. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 2 wherein the thermoplastic binder is an amorphous binder in the form of a powder having particle sizes in the range of one (1) to five hundred (500) microns, the powder binder having a melting point in the range from eighty-five (85) to one hundred degrees Centigrade (100 °C).

~~14.~~ Cancelled

~~15.~~ Cancelled

~~17.~~ Cancelled

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- ~~18.~~ Cancelled
- ~~19.~~ Cancelled
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